The Child of Yesterday and To-day

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"Over Two Seas" is a bit more thrilling and exotic, more in the nature of possibly plausible adventure than of everyday occurrence. Again we find two boys on board ship, this time in the Southern Pacific. The captain in this case is the father of one, and so the lot of the ordinary seaman is not theirs. They go through a storm in the tropics and a battle with bushmen in the Solomon Islands.

The author of "Scott Burton and the Timber Thieves" is director of the school of forestry in the University of Minnesota and therefore competent to give a picture of woodsmen and the life of the forest. Scott Burton is a ranger whom the Federal Government assigns to run down marauders who have been mysteriously cutting publicly owned timber in Florida. He succeeds and has an exciting time of it. The book is entertaining.

"George Washington" is announced as the first of a series of sketches of American historical personages for children. The author's purpose is thus expressed in the preface: "Washington is placed upon a pedestal as a cold, aloof, blameless figure to be worshipped. Boys and girls do not like that sort of hero." The average boy is interested in Washington, and the story of his life, without idealization or trimmings, is romantic and thrilling enough to suit anybody. Here the first President is presented in accurate terms, with his difficulties and his political quarrels shown in proper proportions. His decency to the captured Cornwallis should appeal to the sportsmanship of boys. Moreover, the Revolutionary War is told without any of that unnecessary animus toward Great Britain that once upon a time was common in school texts and historical fiction.

The little girl in "No, Virginia!" observes that all the houses in a particular street are alike except one, which is decorated in a distinctive manner that arouses her admiration. Whereupon she remarks that beauty would be more prevalent did not some lazy persons think it too much trouble—not a bad bit of criticism. Having overheard a woman remark as they rode along in a carriage that, however happy all the passing homes appeared, there was much tragedy and sorrow scattered among them, Virginia thinks it an idea worth repeating and gives it to a child friend later. "What's the tragedy in that house?" asks her auditor. Virginia hesitates, but finally explains in detail, giving names and dates. Such is Virginia, a child with a lively imagination, initiative and high spirits—in other words, a normal, healthy youngster. She feels unduly restrained in the routine of boarding school and her reflections on such institutions are fresh and amusing. A book for girls, but also worthy of the attention of boys if they can be got to read it.

"Peggy Pretend" lives in an old Virginia town and in not very prosperous circumstances. Into her young life come such things as the mortgage on the house and other family troubles. But Peggy has a genius for bolstering up hope and this through various vicissitudes brings at last good luck to her family. This may sound like the extravagances of Pollyanna, but in the first place the story is charmingly told and in the second place every one who has read that essay (which everybody ought to read), "The Will to Believe," knows that there is a certain measure of truth in it. Faith, or the "will to believe," may when other things are equal just turn the scale. Edna F. Hart Hubon has added to the attractiveness of the book with illustrations that admirably express the spirit of it.

"The Marines Have Advanced" is a story of the experiences of these troops in hunting German spies in the Philadelphia Navy Yard. How accurate a representation of such war time man hunts it is would be difficult for a civilian to say. There is a valuable chapter on the engineering work that boys in the Marine Corps learn. The story, which shifts to Hayti and Mexico, is thrilling enough; but many a parent will prefer books that do not accentuate the already pronounced heritage of feeling against everybody who happens to be of German nationality, as this one is likely to do.

"The Golden West Boys," written by a man who typifies the Wild West in the films, is the story of the experiences of two boys in the semi-lawless cattle country. The story is fairly well told and, be it added, law and order win out in the end.

Those of a mechanical bent (which includes nine out of ten boys) will find in "Ted and the Telephone" a story that will interest them. Here too the capital-labor question plays a minor part, but the treatment of it is not unfair.

"Blacky the Crow" will appeal to those who know Thornton W. Burgess's stories of animals. It is in the best juvenile style and the illustrations by Harrison Cady are excellent.

"'Pon-a-Time Tales" relate the origin of a number of natural and manufactured articles from the moon to a cake of soap.

"Three Golden Hairs" is one of two fascinating plays for children, adapted from Grimm's Fairy Tales. The quest of the boy who goes after the three golden hairs of the giant is effectively presented, and should serve to give to children a taste for dramatic literature.

"The Wild Heart" is a book for very young children, in which animals troop forth each with a characteristic individuality; pictures by Paul Branson. In "The Little People of the Garden" the bee, the ant, the frog, the earthworm, the spider are personified; illustrations are by L. J. Bridgman. "Little Folks' Book of Nature" is also elementary, with paragraphs descriptive of domestic and wild animals; there are colored plates.

Problems of the Young

CHILD VERSUS PARENT. By Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. The Macmillan Company.

GIVE ME THE YOUNG. By Edmond Holmes. E. P. Dutton & Co.

MEETING YOUR CHILD'S PROBLEMS. By Miriam Finn Scott. Little, Brown & Co.

In one of Bernard Shaw's plays there is a woman who laughs scornfully at the idea that she should respect her own daughter. The absurdity of paying respect, she holds, arises not from any shortcoming of the younger woman, but from the very relationship of parent and child. This attitude, ludicrous as it may seem, is typical of an old but unfortunately not yet obsolete point of view toward the young, for it is still too common for parents to regard children as objects to labor for and cherish after the manner of other valuables, rather than as separate entities with individual rights and desires that merit respect. But the fallacy of the old point of view is gradually coming to be realized; and no more definite testimony to that fact need be cited than the three books under review, wherein we have an appeal for a more considerate and rational treatment of the young.

"Honor thy son and daughter, born and unborn," urges Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, in his interesting and thoughtful volume on "Child Versus Parent." Though "we cannot choose our grandparents," remarks the author, "we can in some measure choose our grandchildren;" and, though the regulation of heredity be a difficult thing, "the least some parents can do for their children is through environmental influence to neutralize the heredity which they have inflicted upon them." For the future of the man and woman depends largely upon the home life of the child; the parents cannot safely leave to the school teacher the intellectual training of their sons and daughters, nor to the priest their moral training; and if fathers and mothers take the path of least resistance and allow their children to drift from them during childhood, they cannot expect that by some miracle they will be any closer after maturity. Parents should be interested in all the doings of their children, without assuming a dictatorial attitude; they should advise without being autocratic, should aid without exacting gratitude in return, and should reverence without looking upon their children as upon mere chattels to be possessed. As Dr. Wise significantly declares, "What is really involved . . . is seen to be a new conception of the home. . . . The home must become a school wherein parents and children alike sit as eager learners and humble teachers, a school for parents in the latter days in the arts of renunciation and for children in the fine arts of outward courtesy and inward chivalry."

II.

Very similar is the position of Edmond Holmes in his volume entitled "Give Me the Young"; but Mr. Holmes probes somewhat deeper than does Dr. Wise, and his deductions are more far reaching and philosophical in their nature. As his major premise he makes some generalizations that are certainly subject to challenge; he contends, for example, that "Never, within the memory of man, was the standard of duty lower than it is to-day. Never was the law of the land less respected. Never were solemn engagements less binding." Seeking to find the cause and the remedy, he considers the question of the training of the young; and here, whether or not his original assumptions be exaggerations, the author is treading on solid ground. For he establishes beyond question that if ideals are ever to be instilled, they must be implanted in the minds of the young; he considers at some length the question of "compulsory idealism" and concludes that ideals cannot be taught, but that they can only be imbibed gradually and unconsciously from a favorable environment as the plant imbibes the warmth and sunlight. Accordingly, he urges that the young be placed in surroundings in which they will see idealism *acted* rather than *advised;* he contends that there is in the mind of every child an inherent tendency toward altruism, which may be stifled by an unfavorable environment, but which with proper cultivation may be developed as the sensitive bud is developed into brilliant bloom by careful watering and care. To this end, he pleads that the environment of children be adapted to giving their natural powers scope for expression; that there should be an appeal to the child for willing service, rather than the rude compulsion of unwilling action; that a child should be allowed to act spontaneously, according to its natural bent, and should not be checked in its instinctive efforts at self-education.

III.

In this plea Miriam Finn Scott joins in with many significant remarks. Her volume is devoted largely to the treatment of very young children; she declares at the outset that the first six years of a child's life constitute "the most important period" of its whole existence; and she emphasizes the fact that it is not sufficient for parents to be careful as to the physical health of their offspring, but that it is even more necessary that mothers and fathers supervise the moral and intellectual

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